

REMARKS

Applicant requests favorable reconsideration and allowance of the subject application in view of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

To place the subject application in better form, the specification has been amended to correct minor informalities. Also, a new abstract is presented in accordance with preferred practice. No new matter has been added by these changes.

Claims 11-18 are presented for consideration. Claim 11 is the sole independent claim. Claims 1-10, 19 and 20 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 11 and 14-18 have been amended to clarify features of the subject invention. Support for these changes can be found in the original application, as filed. Therefore, no new matter has been added.

Applicant notes with appreciation that claims 11-13, 17 and 18 have been allowed over the art of record, and that claims 14-16 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the Examiner's objection discussed below. Applicant also notes with appreciation that claims 2, 4, 5 and 7-9 have been indicated as containing allowable subject and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the recitations of their base and intervening claims.

Applicant requests favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection and rejection set forth in the above-noted Office Action.

Claims 6-8 and 14-16 have been objected to due to informalities. Specifically, the Examiner objected to the recitations regarding "the marks" and "the mark." To expedite prosecution, Applicant has amended claims 14-16 in light of the Examiner's comments. In particular, Applicant has clarified, as recited in claim 14, for example, that a plurality of kinds of

the mark are arranged on the original stage. Applicant submits that the changes to claims 14-16 overcome the Examiner's objection. Such favorable indication is requested.

Turning now to the art rejection, claims 1, 3, 6, 10, 19 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,023,320 to Kawashima. Applicant submits that the cited art does not teach or suggest many features of the present invention, as previously recited these claims. Therefore, this rejection is respectfully traversed.

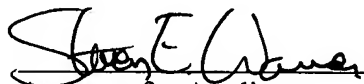
Nevertheless, as discussed above, Applicant has canceled claims 1-10, 19 and 20, without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicant has done so in order to expedite allowance of this application. All pending claims, namely, claims 11-18, being allowable, Applicant submits that the instant application is in condition for allowance.

Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the objection and rejection set forth in the above-noted Office Action and an early Notice of Allowance are requested.

Still further, Applicant requests the Examiner to contact his undersigned representative should any matters be deemed outstanding precluding allowance of this application.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010 All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven E. Warner", is written over a horizontal line.

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